



**COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**



**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**

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Part	Section	Subject	Policy No.	Review Date
Administration and Management	Personnel	Recognition and Awards Program	1.3.7	
<b>ACA Standard</b>	3-ALDF-1A-14; Standard Operating Procedures; PSSR&R VI.A Incentives and Awards; VI.B Recognition and Awards			
<b>Consent Decree</b>	Paragraph 54; Develop Facility Policies and Procedures			

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for the Recognition and Awards Program to members of the Department of Corrections for acts performed beyond expectation.

**II. POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Department of Corrections to recognize members who have performed above and beyond expected levels of performance through the administration of appropriate awards.

**III. OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the Recognition & Awards Program is to foster morale and "Esprit de Corps" and to grant incentives. This is achieved by providing a standardized and updated format through which the department gives official public recognition for sustained superior performance and/or specific acts by its own members.

**IV. DEFINITIONS**

**Corrections Officer:** A sworn member of the Department of Corrections who has been administered an Oath of Office as prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth and the rules and regulations of the Department of Corrections.

**Administrative Staff:** A non-sworn member whose duties do not require the administration of an Oath of Office.

## V. PROCEDURES

It shall be the responsibility of any individual having personal and factual knowledge of an act, achievement, or service believed to warrant an award and recognition to submit a formal nomination to the Recognition & Awards Board. The Recognition & Awards Board may conduct such independent investigations as deemed necessary to ascertain the facts bearing on each award nomination and will either accept or decline the nomination based on the quality and merit of the nomination.

### Categories of Awards

Awards authorized by DOC shall be divided into six (6) major categories:

#### 1. Medals of Valor

##### a. Gold Star

Only sworn members of DOC are eligible to receive the Gold Star, Medal of Valor. It is awarded to an individual who distinguishes him/ herself by exceptional bravery and heroism in the performance of an official meaningful act involving extreme risk to personal safety or imminent peril (loss of life), which is clearly far above and beyond the call of duty.

The family of a sworn officer who is killed in the line of duty shall be presented with a Gold Star Medal of Valor at a ceremony honoring the slain officer.

A unanimous "ye" votes by the Board is required to issue the Gold Star Medal of Valor. The Board is instructed to reserve this award and consider only those acts of heroism that are so valiant and far beyond any normal act of bravery that they completely overshadow the majority of valorous acts.

##### b. Silver Star

Only sworn members of DOC are eligible to receive the Silver Star. This is the second highest award given for valor. The Silver Star is presented to an individual who distinguishes him/herself by displaying courage and bravery while performing an official meaningful act involving personal risk above and beyond the call of duty.

Sworn member who receives life threatening injuries that creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ because of hostile adversary action while in the performance of official duty will receive a Silver Star.

Hostile adversary action includes any act against an officer, whether individually or with several persons acting in concert, which results in the officer receiving a life threatening injury. The action against the officer shall be recklessly, knowingly, or intentionally initiated, and shall be through the use of a substantial amount of force or with the use of a "dangerous instrument," which is intended to incapacitate or overcome the officer.

The injury to the officer should be a result of action taken by the officer, as opposed to inaction, whether on-duty or off-duty, while acting under the color of his/her authority, and not caused by his/her negligence or failure to follow any rule, regulation or safety practices of the Department.

The great majority of acts of valor fall within the definition of this award. This award requires a majority "ye" votes by the Recognition & Awards Board.

## **2. Life-Saving Award**

Sworn and non-sworn members of DOC are eligible to receive the Life-Saving Award. This is the only award given for saving a life. The Life-Saving Award is awarded to an individual who distinguishes him/herself by saving the life of another person or persons through direct action and intervention in a life-threatening situation. It is not necessary that the individual performing the act of life saving expose him/herself to physical danger. An example is saving the life of a heart-attack victim by administering CPR. This award may be given as merited, and requires a majority decision by the Recognition & Awards Board.

## **3. Individual Performance Awards**

### **a. Annual Performance Award**

The Annual Performance Award is the highest award given for individual superior performance. It is presented to an individual who distinguishes him/herself by sustained superior performance for not less than one (1) year. The individual has to demonstrate competency, efficiency, dedication, loyalty, good judgment, enthusiasm and ingenuity that are clearly far above the requirements of his/her duties, and the efforts of his/her peers. Eligible individuals must have been employed with DOC for a minimum of two (2) years. The award is restricted to two (2) recipients per year. The award requires a majority "ye" votes by the Board.

Recipient categories are as follows:

1. Employee of the Year  
(Administrative Staff or Corrections Officer III and Below)

2. Supervisor of the Year  
(Administrative Supervisor, Sergeant and Above)

**b. Meritorious Service Award**

All members of DOC are eligible to receive the Meritorious Service Award. This award is given for individual superior performance. The Meritorious Service Award is presented to an individual who distinguishes him/herself by sustained superior performance for a period of not less than one (1) year. The individual has to have demonstrated competency, efficiency, dedication, loyalty, good judgment, enthusiasm and ingenuity that are clearly above the requirements of his/her duties and the efforts of his/her peers. This award may also be presented to any member who retires with 25 years or more of service. This award may be given as merited, and requires a majority "ye" votes Board.

**c. Employee of the Quarter Award**

The Employee of the Quarter is given to an individual for superior performance. The award is presented to an individual who distinguishes him/herself by sustained superior performance for one (1) quarter of the calendar year through his/her competency, dedication and efficiency in an exceptionally outstanding performance of duty. The individual must demonstrate accomplishments above that of his/her peer. The individual must have been employed by DOC for a minimum of two (2) years. Further, the individual must not have had any written reprimands during the quarter the award is considered for. The award is restricted to one (1) recipient within DOC per quarter. The Commissioner selects the recipient for the award from nominees submitted by respective supervisors.

**d. Commanding Officer's Citation Award**

All members of DOC are eligible to receive the Commanding Officer's Citation. The Commanding Officer's Citation is the fourth highest award given for superior performance, and is awarded to an individual who distinguishes him/herself by the excellent achievement of a specific act, project or assignment. This award does not have to be approved by the Recognition & Awards Board. It may be presented as merited and must be submitted via chain-of-command to the Commissioner for approval.

**4. Outstanding Unit Performance Citation Award**

Any unit of the official organization within DOC is eligible to receive the Outstanding Unit Performance Citation. This is the only award given for outstanding performance as a unit. The Outstanding Unit Performance Citation is awarded to a unit that distinguishes itself by demonstrating sustained superior

performance over a period of time, or for outstanding performance of a specific act, project or assignment far above than normally expected of any unit. This award does not have to be approved by the Board, but may be awarded at the discretion of the Commissioner.

#### **5. Miscellaneous Awards**

Acts or services above the normal course of duty, which do not meet the criteria for decorations or the authorized certificates, may be recognized by the issuance of Letters of Commendation and/or Certificates of Appreciation by the Supervisor, Commander, Major and/or the Commissioner to those persons who make contributions which are worthy of recognition but do not meet the minimum standards for honor awards.

#### **C. Power, Scope and Establishment of the Recognition & Awards Board**

1. The Commissioner shall establish a Recognition & Awards Board. This Board shall consider all award nominations properly placed before them during their tenure. The Recognition & Awards Board shall consist of the following:
  - One (1) Chairperson
  - One (1) Vice-Chairperson
  - Five (5) Members
2. The Chairperson of the Board and its members shall review this policy and procedures and may submit an addendum to the Commissioner for approval or disapproval.
3. The Commissioner shall appoint members of the Board by personnel orders. The appointments shall be effective for a period of two (2) years immediately upon appointment and shall end two (2) years thereafter.
4. No member of the Board shall serve in excess of two (2) years continuous service.
5. If a member of the Board resigns retires, or fails to complete his/her full term for any reason, the Commissioner shall immediately appoint a replacement from the same criteria.
6. If a member of the Board is a nominee for any award, or has nominated an individual for an award, the member shall abstain from discussion or voting, specifically on any matters related to this nomination.
7. Five (5) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.
8. Each member of the Board shall have one (1) vote. The Chairperson shall vote only in the event of a "tie".

9. The Board shall review all award nominations that have been properly submitted. It has the authority to change the award category, higher or lower than the award nominated. The Board may also deny an award should it determine its action is justified based on facts.
10. All nominations for award, except for the Commanding Officer's Citation, and the Outstanding Unit Performance Citation, must be submitted to Board for a consideration and decision.
11. All nominations for awards that are to be presented during the Annual Awards Ceremony must be submitted to the Board no later than one month before the scheduled date of the Recognition & Awards Ceremony. This is necessary in order to give the Board ample time to thoroughly review submittals, so as to make the proper selection from the list of nominees. Nominations that do not meet this deadline will not be considered and shall be rejected.
12. The Board shall comply fully with this policy and procedures.
13. All awards received shall be made a permanent part of the recipient's personnel file.

**D. Limitations and Restrictions**

1. Extreme caution shall be exercised in the issuance of any award. If there is any doubt, the nomination shall be rejected.
2. A nominee for any individual performance award category cannot have a written reprimand, a pending or on-going criminal investigation, or an administrative investigation during the period for which the award is being considered.
3. The only awards authorized for wear are awards approved by the Board as approved by the Commissioner. The wearing of any other awards, such as medals, insignia or ribbons, etc., received from any outside institutions shall first be submitted to the Board for consideration and approval or disapproval before worn. The Board is entrusted with the authority to approve or deny any such request.

**E. Design and Display of Medals and Award**

1. If an award is given to a unit, it shall be displayed in the unit's work area. Additional copies of the award may be given to the individual members of the unit.
2. The Gold Star Medal of Valor shall consist of a medal, a shirt ribbon, and a certificate. The medal shall be gold in color. On the top portion of the medal, the words "MEDAL OF VALOR" are inscribed in blue lettering. On the center



portion of the medal shall be the CNMI Official Seal. Bordering the seal, the words, "Department of Corrections" shall be inscribed in blue lettering. The medal shall be attached to a blue, red, and white ribbon of proper length, so that when suspended from the recipient's neck, the medal will rest on the upper center portion of the chest just below the collar. The ribbon shall be gold in color.

3. The Silver Star shall consist of a medal, shirt bar and a certificate. The medal shall be gold and blue in color with the CNMI Official Seal in the center. Bordering the lower half of the CNMI Seal, the words, "SILVER STAR" are inscribed in gold lettering. The shirt bar shall be blue in color with a silver star in the center.
4. The Life-Saving Award shall consist of a medal, shirt bar and a certificate. The medal shall be gold in color with the CNMI Official Seal in the center. Bordering the lower half of the CNMI seal, the words, "LIFE-SAVING" are inscribed in gold on a blue background. The shirt bar shall be red/white/red in color.
5. The "Annual Performance Award" shall consist of a medal, shirt bar and a certificate for uniformed recipients. For civilian recipients the award shall consist of a certificate and a plaque. The plaque shall be of high grade polished wood. A gold colored plate with the name of the recipient, the words "Corrections Officer/Civilian or Supervisor of the Year", and the year for the award shall be inscribed on the plate under the lettering "Department of Corrections" which shall be centered on the upper portion of the plate.
6. The "Meritorious Service Medal" shall be gold, red and blue in color with the Official CNMI Seal in the center. Bordering the lower half of the seal, the words, "MEDAL OF MERIT" are inscribed in silver lettering on a blue background. Bordering the upper half of the seal is the wreath white in color with a star connecting the wreath. The shirt bar shall be red and white in color.
7. The Citizens Award for Meritorious Act shall consist of a high grade, polished wood plaque. A gold colored plate shall be affixed to the plaque with the following inscription. On the upper center portion of the plate the word "HEROISM" shall be engraved. Under this, the text "Presented to (Name) for heroism in the face of imminent peril on (date of act) by the Department of Corrections".
8. The Outstanding Unit Performance Citation shall consist of a plaque and a certificate for the unit.
9. The "Commanding Officer's Citation shall consist of a certificate. The certificate shall be on parchment or similar type paper.
10. The Outstanding Unit Performance Citation, Commanding Officer's Citation, Letter of Commendation and Certificate of Appreciation shall be on parchment or

similar paper. It shall have a border design. On the top center first line, the words "Department of Corrections." The second line shall have the words "Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands." The font for the first and second line should be normal Arial 20. The third line shall be the type of certificate. It should be bold with normal Algerian 26 font. The fourth line the words "awarded to." The fifth line shall be a line for the name of the recipient. The sixth line the word "for." The seventh line shall be a line for the purpose of the certificate. The eighth line, the words "by the Department of Corrections." The ninth line the words "Awarded this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_." The tenth line is a line and beneath the line is the name of the person that issued the Citation, Letter of Commendation and/or Certificate of Appreciation.

#### **F. Presentation of Awards**

1. The Gold Star, Silver, Meritorious Service and Life-Saving Award shall be presented by the Governor or designee in a department-wide standing formation.
2. The Commissioner shall present the Annual Performance Awards, Commanding Officer's Citation, Outstanding Unit Performance Citation and the Employee of the Quarter Awards. It may be presented at roll call, recruit graduation, department meeting or gathering. The Commissioner shall designate the date, time and location.
3. With the exception of the Employee of the Quarter, all other awards shall be presented once a year unless the Board decides otherwise.

#### **G. When in Uniform**

1. Medals can only be worn on Class A uniform. It must be worn any time the Class A uniform is worn. When more than one award (medal or decoration) is worn, there shall be no more than three medals (ribbons) on each row evenly centered above the right breast pocket  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch above the name plate. The medals shall be worn in order of precedence.
2. Ribbons shall be worn at all times with Class B uniform. They shall centered,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch above the nameplate.

#### **H. Special Instructions for the Recognition & Awards Board**

1. Only review nominations and pertinent documents timely submitted. All nominations and supporting documents shall be submitted on time. Any documents not submitted on time shall be rejected.
2. Verbal information, any comments or hearsay shall not be admitted as evidence.



3. The Chairperson shall allow only committee members to be present during deliberations. He or She shall enforce discipline among the committee members and shall observe and exercise professionalism.
4. Whenever a motion is made, seconded and voted upon, the decision shall be final.
5. The Board shall comply with all directives applicable to them.
6. In the event that a board member is habitually absent during scheduled meetings, the Chairperson shall make a request to the Commissioner to appoint a replacement.
7. In the event that the Chairperson is absent, the Vice-Chairperson shall chair the meeting.
8. Disclosing the names of nominees selected to receive awards to any other than the Commissioner by any committee member is strictly prohibited. The same prohibition applies to information on deliberations.
9. All documents submitted to the Board for review shall be attached to the Board's final decisions or recommendations and transmitted to the Commissioner.

#### **I. Posting of Award Recipients in the Facility**

A space on the wall in the facility shall be made available for the purposes of posting the names, photographs and categories of awards each recipient received. The space made available should be on a conspicuous area where the public and staff can see. Only the photographs of the Employee of the Quarter and Employee of the Year shall be posted on the space. Sworn officers shall be in uniform when a photograph is taken for this purpose. In all other categories, only the name and the award will be posted.

#### **J. Cash Award**

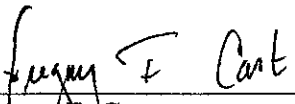
The Commissioner will include in the annual budget five thousand five hundred dollars (\$5,500.00) that will be used as cash awards on the recipients of the Medal of Valor Gold Star Medal, Silver Star Medal, Life-Saving Award, Meritorious Service Award, and Annual Performance Award. Each recipient shall receive five hundred dollars (\$500.00) in addition to the medal, certificate and plaque as enumerated above. In the absence of funds due to budget constraints, each recipient shall receive the medal, certificate and plaque.

Upon approval by the Commissioner, this SOP will be forwarded to the Personnel Officer for review, adoption and implementation.

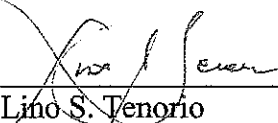
DOC recognizes that applicable CNMI/Federal laws and provisions of the CNMI Government Property Management Policies and Procedures preside over this policy and procedures.

Prepared by:   
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11/8/07  
Date

Reviewed by:   
Gregory R. Castro  
Director of Corrections

11/8/07  
Date

Approved by:   
Lino S. Tenorio  
Commissioner of Corrections

11/08/07  
Date